Independent Study Program Fact Sheet

May 2011

General Information:

The Emergency Management Institute's (EMI) Distance Learning (DL) Section offers the Independent Study Program (ISP). This is a distance learning program which offers training, free of charge, to the nation's emergency management network and the general public. It serves as both an alternative means to deliver valuable training to the professional and volunteer emergency management community, and an opportunity to improve public awareness and promote disaster preparedness nationally. The Independent Study Program offers over 100 training courses via our training website. There has been substantial growth in the program since 2004 due to the National Incident Management System training requirements.

Students are able to obtain continuing education units for all ISP courses. ISP also offers college credit for many of the courses through an agreement with the Frederick Community College. Students who successfully complete courses can also request student transcripts be provided to institutions to assist students in obtaining continuing education units and/or to military institutions for military personnel to earn retirement points. In addition, the program offers a customer support center to assist students. The customer support center can be reached through email or telephone at 301-447-1200. The hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:00am -6:00pm.

In an effort to continually enhance the program, improvements are being planned. Some of these improvements include: upgrading our systems to offer additional features; changing our website to provide a more intuitive approach for users to access the information they need; establishing reporting tools for state training officers and organizations to assist in tracking completions; offering easier access for students to the course content and their certificates of completion; capturing course evaluation data; and developing courses that use a variety of distance learning technologies.

Program Statistics:

- In fiscal year 2010, there were 1,964,042 course completions within the program.
- The average cost per student completion was $1.63
- The ISP customer support center provides assistance with approximately 2,100 student inquiries each week.
- The ISP processes over 37,000 test submissions weekly. This includes almost 34,000 that are processed automatically via test submissions received from the web and 1,900 which are processed manually into the database.
- There is an average of 59 students who apply for college credits each week, resulting in more then 40,000 credits being awarded through Frederick Community College.